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BY

HON. C. M. CANDLER

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## Alumni Address

Mr. President, Fellow Alumni, Ladies and Gentlemen:

"As it is the distinguishing happiness of free government, that civil order should be the result of choice, and not necessity, and the common wishes of the people become the law of the land, their public prosperity, and even their existence, very much depend upon suitably forming the minds and morals of their citizens.

Where the minds of the people in general are viciously disposed and unprincipled, and their conduct disorderly, a free government will be attended with greater confusions, and with evils more horrid than the wild, uncultivated state of nature.

It can only be happy where the public principles and opinions are properly directed, and their manners regulated. This is an influence beyond the stretch of laws and punishments, and can be claimed only by religion and education.

It should therefore, be among the first objects of those who wish well to the national prosperity to encourage and support the principles of religion and morality, and early to place the youth under the forming hand of Society, that by instruction they may be moulded to the love of virtue and good order. \* \* \*

"This country, in the times of our common danger and distress, found such security in the principles and abilities which wise regulations had before established in the minds of our countrymen, that our present happiness, joined to pleasing prospects, should conspire to make us feel ourselves under the strongest obligations to form the youth, the rising hope of our land, to render the like glorious and essential services to our country."

Thus spake our forefathers in the Charter of the University of Georgia, and surely in this presence, and to these sons of our historic Alma Mater, whose charge was "the general superintendence and regulation of the literature of this State," I need offer no apology for attempting today to discuss Public Education in Georgia.

Called at the eleventh hour to the discharge of the honorable duty before me, by reason of the inability of the distinguished Dr. Hadley, of Yale, or either of his alternates to be present, I am deeply conscious of my lack of fitness to fill their place, and have therefore selected this subject as one in which I feel assured you have a sympathetic interest. It is a subject demanding plain statements of fact, rather than eloquent speech. It is an old theme,

yet ever present and ever vital, so long as one generation succeeds another. It concerns us today, as it did our forefathers and as it will our children's children.

To begin at the beginning. In the first Constitution ordained by the people of free Georgia, our forefathers, in 1777, declared that "Schools shall be erected in each county and supported at the expense of the State, as the Legislature shall hereafter point out."

In that same instrument there were created eight counties, and within eight years thereafter, notwithstanding the fact that during practically this entire period the State was engaged in a bloody struggle for the right of existence as an independent government—notwithstanding the unsolved and vexing problems of a people engaged in blazing out new governmental paths—notwithstanding the financial stress of a government without a treasury, and the poverty of pioneer settlers whose only assets were in unexplored forest wilds, every county had its public academy, established at the expense of the State, and the system crowned with the proposed State University, from whose Charter I have just quoted—the Act of 1785, providing that "All public schools, instituted or to be supported by funds or public monies in this State, shall be considered as parts or members of the University." \* \* \* \* and the duty imposed on the President of the University, as often as the duties of his station should permit, at least once in a year, to visit every school and examine into its "order and performance."

During the first one hundred years of her independent history, Georgia had six Constitutions, and in every one, save that of 1789, in force for only nine years—and the crudest and most imperfect of all our fundamental laws—the promotion of learning and science and the education of the people were made mandatory on the Legislatures, and unlimited power and the widest discretion granted them in devising methods and means for the attaining of the great end desired—the universal education of the people.

As the forefathers of 1777 believed that the general diffusion of education was one of the chief pillars on which rested the stability of the government they were struggling to establish, even so believed the fathers of 1861, and in the Constitution of that year, facing a struggle for the preservation of the rights their sires had won, unparelled in the histories of war, they declared "The General Assembly shall have the power to appropriate money for the promotion of learning and science, and to provide for the education of the people."

After four years of bloody war, the heroes of a lost cause returned to desolated homes and wasted fields, and gathered together the remnants of manhood, met together for the framing of a new Constitution, and realizing more than ever that the hope of good

government depended upon suitably forming the minds of the youth of the State, that they might "render the like glorious and essential services to their country," they reordained the educational provision of the Constitution of 1861, in that of 1865, and further directed the General Assembly to provide "for the early resumption of the University of Georgia by the adequate endowment of the same."

The Constitution of 1868, an infinitely better instrument than any one—at the beginning of the Convention which framed it, judging from the personnel of the great majority of its membership—could have anticipated, contained the mandatory provision that the first Legislature to assemble after its ratification, should establish "a thorough system of general education, to be forever free to all the children of the State, the expense of which to be provided by taxation or otherwise."

In not one of these instruments, from 1777 to 1877, was there a limitation on the powers of the Legislature to support by taxation nor a restriction on their discretion as to the scope of character of the educational system to be supported at the public expense.

For the first time, in 1877, Georgia adopted a contracted and narrow view of the State's interest and duty in public education, and in the Constitution of that year, the mandatory provision for "a thorough system of common schools for the education of children" was qualified, and the unfortunate restriction added, "in the elementary branches of an English education only," and the power to tax for educational purposes so limited.

Unfortunately this was not all, for in that instrument, municipalities and counties were so hampered by restrictions as to their power to tax themselves, that for more than a quarter of a century, educational progress in progressive communities, has been handicapped and thousands of children pleading for bread, have had to be content with the crusts afforded by the insufficient funds from the State Treasury.

Prior to the ratification of the Constitution of 1877, it was in the power and discretion of the Legislature, to provide and support by taxation and otherwise, a thorough, complete and correlated system of public education, beginning with Elementary Schools, on through Secondary Schools, to the University.

The Constitution of 1877 rendered impossible any complete State system of public education. It provided only for the establishment and maintenance of elementary schools, and the support of the University, without any connecting links. It provided for the laying of a foundation and the putting on of the capstone, thus erecting a structure dwarfed in its very conception.



This narrow view of the State's interest in and duty to public education, was placed in the Constitution on the initiative of men who were avowed enemies to the principle of education of the people by the State, at the public expense.

I have seen it stated in a paper by Prof. Stewart, and subsequently in a speech by Hon. H. H. Perry of Gainesville, at Mill-edgeville, that Gen. Toombs was responsible for the Constitutional restriction on our educational system and if I remember correctly the newspaper reports of Mr. Perry's speech, reported him as thanking Gen. Toombs, for such a restriction. These generally well informed gentlemen are mistaken in ascribing to General Toombs the authorship of this clause, or direct responsibility therefor.

I regret that on the aye and no vote on its adoption, he is recorded as having voted for it, but the Convention records do not show that he did more, nor that he spoke a word during the debate thereon.

The education article of the Constitution as prepared and reported by the Committee on Education, of which Gen. Toombs was not a member, did not contain this restriction nor was it in the article as reported to the Convention by the Committee on Final Revision, of which Gen. Toombs was Chairman.

The amendment to the Article as reported by the Committee, restricting public education to "the elementary branches of an English education only," was offered by Judge Augustus Reese, of Morgan County, and vigorously advocated by him and by Mr. Holcombe of Milton, both of whom stated that they were opposed to the whole theory of public education at State expense and would abolish it if they had the power.

Gen. Toombs voted for the amendment, as did a majority of the Convention—of more than this he must be acquitted.

I cannot believe that a majority of the Convention voted for the Reese amendment upon the same convictions as did its author, but rather because of then existing peculiar political conditions and the public unrest following the Presidential election of 1876. Nor do I believe that such a Constitutional restriction upon the scope of public education would be favored by a Constitutional Convention in 1907, or ratified by the voters of 1907, if submitted to them.

Not only was it for the first time in our State history, that in 1877 we embodied in our fundamental law this narrow view of the object and scope of public education, but for the first time we actually placed an embargo on education by religious or philanthropic organizations or institutions, willing to assume a part of the public burden and aid in the great work of training the young

and fitting them for the duties of citizenship, in the limitation placed on the power of the General Assembly to exempt from taxation other property than the "buildings erected for and used as a College, incorporated Academy, or other Seminary or learning."

God speed the day when public sentiment and a realization of the needs of the State for more and better educated citizens, will demand of the Legislature the submission for ratification by the people, of a Constitutional Amendment exempting from taxation all property exclusively used in the great cause of education.

I do not fear a union of Church and State or the evils of "dead hand," in a republican form of government, nearly so much as I do the danger to its stability from the ignorance of the suffragists.

I have thus far undertaken to show the broad conception our fathers had as to the necessity for the education of the people, under a government of the people, by the people, and at the expense of the people, as illustrated in our earlier Constitutional history, and that it was only as recently as 1877 that our ideal of a broad, complete and correlated system of public education was abandoned.

With this brief review I desire to call attention to educational conditions today and to some of the needs of our system.

The estimated school population in Georgia in 1905, was 720,000, of whom about 375,000 were white and 345,000 colored.

Of this population probably one-half were males, so that if all lived, in 1920, 360,000 new voters would be entitled to participate in the government of the State.

Of the 720,000 persons between six and eighteen years of age, 488,000, or 67 per cent, at one time or another during the year, went to a school house and placed their names on the school rolls—but out of this enrollment there was an average attendance during the year of only 280,000, or less than 40 per cent of the school population. Of this average attendance, 172,000 were white children, that is only 46 per cent of the white school population of Georgia attended school in 1905 with any degree of regularity. In other words, less than one-half of the white children and only two-fifths of all the children of the State attended school after enrollment.

When I have mentioned this one fact I have said enough to attract the thoughtful attention of every patriotic Georgian who has at heart the welfare of society or the perpetuity of good government. Need we wonder that the census enumerators found in Georgia in 1900, more than 475,000 persons ten years of age and over, unable to read or write their names, of whom over 100,000 were whites.

Let us analyze these figures further.

Of the estimated school population in 1905, approximately 600,000 lived in the county and in the small towns, leaving a strictly urban population of approximately 120,000.

This rural school population is almost entirely dependent on the State Common school fund. In 1905 this fund was approximately \$1,735,000, of which about \$1,450,000 was available for the 600,000 rural children, that is, less than \$2.50 per child.

Of the rural school population, 389,000 were enrolled in the State system, with an average attendance of 217,000.

That is, only 36 per cent, barely more than one in three of the rural school population in the State regularly attended school in 1905. Of the white children in the rural districts of the State, only 131,000, or 40 per cent of the total, attended regularly.

In the local systems in the State in 1905, mainly in the cities and towns, the enrollment was 70 per cent as against 55 per cent in the rural districts and the average attendance 53 per cent of the population as against 36 per cent in the rural districts.

The expenditure per capita for the urban children was \$12.72 as against \$3.72 per capita for the rural children.

The average number of days taught in the rural districts was 103, as against 8 1-2 months in the urban districts.

These figures demonstrate that the cities and larger towns in Georgia, are in a large measure doing their duty in providing educational opportunities for their children, and that they see the necessity for general education and are taxing themselves to provide it.

For every dollar given them by the State, they are raising four dollars by local taxation.

The enrollment, however, of only 70 out of every one hundred and the average attendance of only 53 out of every one hundred, suggest to my mind the inquiry as to whether having provided 8 1-2 months per year of good free schools by taxation, they should not consider whether the time has not arrived, when in such communities the attendance on these schools should by law, be made compulsory.

The statistics given further demonstrate the total inadequacy of our rural schools, and prove the fact that five-sixths of the children of the State are not enjoying equal opportunities with the remaining one-sixth, who live within the limits of our towns and cities.

This is neither fair to the children living in the country, nor is it to the interest of the State.

To my mind the blighting imperfections and the glaring weakness of our State Educational system, are sadly shown in the rural districts of the State.

Six hundred thousand children, of whom 325,000 are white, being educationally starved. It is to this condition of public education in the rural districts that I desire especially to call your attention.

I believe the crying need of our system is the immediate establishment and the liberal support of more, better equipped, better taught, and better supervised elementary schools, with the vital connecting links of Secondary schools, in which large numbers of our country boys and girls would be enabled to secure larger opportunities and fitness for usefulness than is obtainable in the primary schools, and through which many others could reach and enjoy the blessings of the State aided institutions of higher education.

With a correlated system of primary and secondary schools in the rural districts, giving to the country boys and girls equal opportunities with their brothers and sisters in the cities, I believe in five years, the attendance upon every one of our State supported institutions, as well as on every denominational college in Georgia, would be doubled, and in a generation, quadrupled.

I believe that utility should be the supreme test in education and that this standard should always be kept in view in shaping the courses of study in the Common schools, Primary and Secondary. At the same time I do not believe it is fair to cut the country boys and girls off from higher opportunities and confine them absolutely and exclusively to elemental or vocational studies.

I would not disparage the abilities nor the virtues of our urban population, but I do believe that the country offers a surer and better field for the development of strong characters and the cultivation of manly virtues, than do our cities. The country is largely free from the vices that attract and allure the young to dissipation and ruin. The environment of country life is more favorable to moral training, as well as physical healthfulness and growth. There are no crowded tenements with their disease laden atmosphere—no narrow alleys in which are nightly lessons of depravity—no gilded resorts in which the young are taught to forget or deride the homely virtues of the fireside. The country boy has room to grow, and filling his lungs with the pure air of heaven, perfumed by the flowers that grow on every side, his activities are not prescribed by a few square feet, but are as broad as the acres over which he romps.

That rare gentleman and able statesman, the Hon. T. G. Lawson, himself a living example of the best product of an ideal country environment, has beautifully and truthfully pictured nature's aid in the development of a country boy. "Conversant day and night with the glory of the heavens, with the beauties of the



earth, and with the songs of the birds, his aesthetical faculties are unconsciously and continuously developed.

"With the earth beneath him, and the vaulted sky above him, his soul luxuriates in the love of freedom with as much felicity as he breathes the free air of heaven, and there is born within him an intense love of country and an eternal hostility to oppression and tyranny. As his mind unfolds and enlarges under the inspiring beauty and love of nature everywhere around him, it imbibes sentiments that revolt against narrow schemes of selfishness, and temptation to sordid commercialism and avarice."

"Charity and hospitality, the fear of God and the love of mankind, create and enrich within him the virtues of a lofty character."

"In the thousands of country homes in Georgia today are found the purest and highest types of true Americanism, and in them is ever kept fresh the hope of our State and our country.

"But rich as are the opportunities bestowed by an all wise Providence on these country boys, yet they do not suffice for the fullest development and the highest equipment for service to Society and the State.

"Their minds should be trained to understand and grasp the problems of the broader life and human society, as well as the lessons of science and philosophy bound up in the common place things about them." They should be taught not alone to find

"Tongues in trees, books in running brooks,

Sermons in stones, and good in everything,"

but that greater lessons, so often forgotten in the isolation of the country, that no man lives unto himself alone—that the highest aim in life is service, and that qualification for the best service is in education."

I plead today for better and wider educational opportunities for the children of the rural districts. Thos. Carlyle said, "This I call tragedy, that there should one man die ignorant, who had capacity for knowledge." I do not know, but possibly, nowhere in the English speaking world, is this tragedy of more frequent occurrence than in the rural districts of Georgia, and with less than one-half of the white school population in these districts attending schools regularly are we of this generation likely to behold fewer such tragedies?

The perfection of our system, the multiplication of our schools, the betterment of their equipment, the employment of better qualified and trained teachers, the broadening of our curriculum, the lengthening of the school terms, none of these can come without larger funds. Money may or may not be, as has been said, the root of all evil, but I believe it is today the sum of all our educational

necessities. In its great need is comprehended all our several needs. If we could give our State rural school system \$6,000,000, instead of \$1,500,000, every other need could be met, and with this sum, we would be doing for the 600,000 rural children of the State only what our cities and towns are doing for their 120,000.

There is but one way in which the urgent need for larger funds can be met, and that is by local taxation. The country must largely help itself, and after all self-help is the best help. It is educational in itself. It exalts the man, as well as ennobles the object.

The State can increase its appropriation to the common school fund, only as taxable values increase. We are now virtually at our constitutional tax limit of five mills, and only as new subjects of taxation or larger properties are found by the tax gatherer, can any considerably larger appropriations be made from the State Treasury.

To secure the supplementary local tax in small towns, districts and counties, by a two-thirds popular vote as our constitution requires, the public mind and conscience must be awakened and aroused.

The saddest truth in regard to education in the rural districts, is that our people do not realize their educational needs. Parents actually think that their children are being equipped for life, children believe that they are being educated, and some of the teachers are satisfied with methods. No human being ever tried to better his condition until he was brought to a realization of his needs, and our rural districts will never have thorough educational advantages until the people themselves get a proper conception of conditions as they are, and of needs as they really exist.

When the public mind is educated, when the public conscience is aroused, self help will follow. The great mass of tax-payers will demand the privilege of aiding the State in educating their children, and in training them for the highest usefulness to the State, to Society, and to themselves.

I do not favor a large per capita school tax, as has been recently suggested in some quarters. Our poll tax, which is an educational tax, is enough on this line, and is constitutionally limited to \$1.00. I believe all property values are enhanced and property rights safe-guarded by universal education, and that property, rather than the individual, should contribute more largely to this enhancement and security.

Nor can I bring myself to favor national aid to common school education, neither do I believe it desirable or politic. In it I can only see the probabilities of complications that would bring endless race troubles in the South, besides bringing us nearer to that cen-

tralization of power in the Federal Government, so dangerous to the reserved rights and powers of the States.

The campaign now needed should be a campaign for the education for voters and tax-payers, in order that the education of the child may follow. When this first campaign is successfully ended, the second will follow and be won, just as the light follows and dispels the darkness.

Do not let us waste our time and energies on side issues. It is idle to talk of compulsory attendance laws for the rural districts until we have a thorough system of elementary schools, amply financed, with better buildings and equipment, with more efficient and better paid teachers, and competent State and county supervision, upon which to compel attendance. Then—and not till then would I advocate a general compulsory attendance law.

There are individuals and economic reasons why we should devote our undivided attention to the perfection and financing of our State system, now so largely a rural system.

Georgia is largely an agricultural State, and notwithstanding our vast strides in manufacturing industries, doubtless for years to come agriculture will continue to be the occupation of a large majority of her people.

The influx of our best rural population to the cities and towns, the increasing abandonment of our farms to a shiftless and careless tenantry, if continued, is bound to prove a calamity.

The hurtful exodus of whites from the country to the cities, is made up largely of two classes; 1st, Parents who value education and realize their duty to give their children the opportunities of obtaining it; and, secondly, of young men, who without proper educational equipment for the pursuit of the noblest profession of life, and without any true idea of its wonderful possibilities, become dissatisfied and seek employment in the cities, in the end only to fix through life, their destinies as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Agriculture is no longer looked upon as an occupation—it is a science. On the soil and its cultivation all life depends for sustenance. It is the sole asset in all creation that is inexhaustible and indestructible, because it contains within itself the possibility of infinite renewal.

Every farm, properly and scientifically tilled and cared for, should be worth more money with each passing year, and yet our youths are daily abandoning the farms to seek in the city dry goods clerkships or motor handles on trolley cars. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and he who is intrusted with the care of even one acre of it, is a co-worker with God.

There is no human occupation in which the exercise of talents

and forethought and the application of principles of science yield quicker or more certain or larger returns. There is no profession in life, in which education of mind and hand is more necessary, or more sadly lacking.

I rejoice that in agricultural education Georgia is preparing to lead the way in the establishment of agricultural high schools in every Congressional district of the State.

Gov. Terrell, in a few days to surrender the helm of State, has the distinction of having occupied the gubernatorial chair for a longer period with one exception than any other Georgian since the war, but this fact will have long been forgotten when it is remembered that to him, more than to any other man or official, is due the successful organization in Georgia of eleven schools in which the teaching of the science of agriculture will be the chief work, and in which may be given some degree of special training which will send our farmer boys back to the farms, better equipped for their life work, and filled with new zeal and higher love for a profession that enobles man and exalts God.

Georgia has need of such young men. Conditions prove this.

There are in this State 37,747,000 acres of land, but only 10,615,000, or 28 per cent are actually under cultivation, the other 72 per cent being unimproved and untilled. The value in 1905 of all farm property in Georgia, including live stock, implements, etc., was \$300,000,000, and the value of the agricultural products of Georgia for 1905, was \$150,000,000. Of the nine climate belts in degrees of latitude, and altitudes from 5,000 feet down to sea level, Georgia can produce within her borders every crop and fruit grown in the United States.

And yet, with advantages of climate and soil equalled by few states, with a farming population in native intelligence and industry surpassed by no people on earth, a study of the crop statistics of the National Government show us sadly behind other states in our methods and in the intelligent application of scientific principles.

In 1905 the average yield of corn per acre in Georgia was eleven bushels as against 28 4-5 in the whole country. In the yield per acre Georgia ranked 46th among 48 states and Territories, only exceeding Florida and South Carolina.

Of wheat, the average per acre was 6 9-10 bushels as against 14 1-2 for the Union, and we ranked 42nd in 44 states, exceeding only North and South Carolina.

In oats, 15 bushels per acre against 34 for the whole country, and out-ranking Florida only in 48 states and territories reported.

In potatoes our yield per acre was 65 bushels, as compared



with 87 for the country, and we ranked 44th in 47 states and territories.

In cotton, our chief crop, we produce about one bale to four acres.

Need I pursue this line further to convince you as I have myself, that Georgia is behind nearly every other agricultural state in this great country, not because of any lack of willing workers with native ability, not because of any disadvantage of climate, not because of sterility of her soils, but because of lack of trained minds and scientific methods.

Every department in life, with its constant changes in industrial conditions due to new application of science, demands better training and greater adaptability on the part of the worker, and in no profession are they more needed than in agriculture.

Science has supplied an immense fund of usable information that is revolutionizing the older methods of our fathers, and the need of which is emphasized because of the almost brutal indifference with which we have robbed our soil of its virgin fertility.

A knowledge of soils, their composition, and characteristics; of plant life, its organism, development and growth, of animal life, of mechanics, of drainage, irrigation and engineering, of agricultural chemistry, physics, and even of elementary commercial law and usages, is not imparted in our elementary schools, nor gathered in a practical way on the farm, except after years spent in careful observation and laborious study, and then only imperfectly and crudely.

This knowledge can best be supplied in a time saving and intelligible manner, in practical agricultural Secondary Schools, supplementary to our elementary schools.

These schools should be wide open to every boy of good character, and every lesson taught from the text books should be illustrated on the school farm. Conducted along the lines upon which they have been organized, and properly equipped and liberally supported by the State, I have unbounded faith in the practical success of the eleven schools we are now building. I can but believe that they will early prove inestimable blessings to thousands and send back to the farms of Georgia yearly increasing numbers of strong young men better equipped for their chosen life work, and fired anew with zeal to make the harvest fields of this great State to wave in double beauty and plenteousness.

And then we are to crown the system with out rejuvenated and reorganized College of Agriculture.

Mr. President, the old college of Agriculture here has never had a square deal. With virtually no equipment, undermanned and half starved, oftentimes unfairly criticized, and always under sus-

picious eyes, it has never been permitted to enjoy the confidence of the agricultural classes of the State, nor given fair opportunity to prove its usefulness.

But I believe a brighter day is dawning. I believe that our people realize the breadth of its field of usefulness and the need of a special school of high standing, whose sole care shall be the development and promotion of the science of agriculture, in which more than one and three quarter millions of our people are directly interested, and on which all depend for the sustenance of life.

This College may not send back to the farm, farm laborers. I trust it will not. But it will send back to our communities trained and educated agriculturalists. It will give us especially fitted and qualified young men as teachers in our agricultural schools, and leaders of thought and examples of immeasurable influence in every community.

In all the range of educational effort, I know no field so hitherto sadly neglected in Georgia as that of agricultural education, nor one of such vast possibilities or direct good to the overwhelming majority of our people.

Let us stop our criticisms. Let us cast aside our suspicions. Let us get close to, and in touch with the work, and let us make this College of Agriculture what it should be, and what it can be made—the chief corner stone of our temple of education, a fountain from which shall flow ever widening streams of influence and knowledge, which shall revive our waste places, and burden them with the heavy headed harvest.

Mr. President, I make no plea today for the University of Georgia, as the head of our system. None is needed in this presence. None ought to be needed anywhere. Her record is one of glorious service, and her past is her pledge for the future.

Brought into existence by the State, the Constitutional mandate of the people is laid on the Legislature to support it as liberally as the condition of the State Treasury will authorize. In recent years the General Assembly has enlarged its appropriations for its support, and I have no fear but that they will be more liberal in the future. It is to the waste places in our common school system that I call your attention, confident that if we build these up—if we awaken a general educational revival among the masses of the people, if we educate from the bottom, we will kindle a flame of educational interest that will, in time, dispel all darkness, and amidst its illuminating rays scores will come up to these halls where now only the few obtain the blessing.

The poverty of our country cannot longer be pleaded in bar of more liberal support to the education of the people by taxation.

A third of a century has passed since war devastated our land, and the indications are that for the first time in 1907 our taxable values will have reached and passed the high water mark of 1860. The same spirit that sustained us through four years of struggle for the right against overwhelming odds, has animated us in the more prolonged struggle of recuperation, and today we stand again on the heights and look upon a country fruited with good and rich in the promise of better things.

Our people are ready for a forward movement toward higher ideals and a grander destiny.

The croaker who halts at the expense of education should be made to stand aside. He must be taught that the education of his children is not only an investment, but a security for every investment that he already has. That an educated mind and an upright character are not only more valuable than all the gold and the silver he can hoard, but that they are the only security he can have for the enjoyment of that which he has accumulated.

The dearest rights of property, of inheritance, of personal security, of life and liberty, all depend under a democratic government, on an educated citizenship, and the man who refuses to contribute to the general diffusion of education and religion is jeopardizing the very thing he holds of highest value.

Gov. Aycock forcibly said, "it undoubtedly appears cheaper to neglect the aged, the feeble, the infirm and the defective, to forget the children of this generation, but the man who does it is cursed of God, and the State that permits it is certain of destruction.

"There are people on the face of the earth who take no care of the weak and infirm, who care naught for their children, and who provide only for the gratification of their own desires, but these people neither wear clothes nor dwell in houses. They leave God out of consideration in their estimate of life, and are known to us as savages."

The fact is, Mr. President, instead of being too poor to support a thorough system of public schools, we are too poor not to sustain such a system. The saying of the wise man of the East, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty," is an inspired truth especially applicable to individuals and states in the matter of educational expenditures.

The wealth of Georgia today consists not in her bank deposits, her stocks and bonds or stores of merchandise, but in the richness and vastness of her undeveloped resources.

And the asset of superlative value among these undeveloped



resources, is in the three quarters of a million children in the State.

The verdict of all history, formed after six thousand years of trial, is, that man's power and capacity as a wealth producer is multiplied in direct proportion to his education and training, and that the ignorant man is always industrially dependent. If, therefore, we would enrich our State, and make her indeed the Empire State, let us take the raw material in these children, and by proper fashioning and forming, make of them men and women.

We hear much of the problems of the day, of combinations of corporate capital and their restraint, of railroads and their regulation, but transcending all these in importance and vital concern, I place before you today the question of the hour, the problem of education.

The question of the Man of Galilee is pertinent today, "For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul."

I love this State of my birth, this land of my fathers. Her people are my people. I long to see them prosperous and contented.

Under the inspiration of this occasion and in this place dedicated to the advancement of religion and education, I believe I see at no distant day, churches and school houses crowning every hill in Georgia, and hear her every valley echoing with the calls of their bells to altar and desk.

With such scenes in mind, I am reminded of the prayer of the patriotic bard of Scotland for his native land:

"O Scotia, my dear, my native soil,

For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent,

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil,

Be blessed with health, and peace, and sweet content!

And oh, may Heaven their simple lives prevent

From luxury's contagion, weak and vile,

Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,

A virtuous populace may arise the while

And stand a wall of fire around their much loved isle."